



# THE ATMOSPHERIC RESERVOIR

*Examining the Atmosphere and Atmospheric Resource Management*

## ARB trains University of ND undergrads

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Each year, during June, July, and August, the North Dakota Cloud Modification Project (NDCMP) is in operation over parts of western North Dakota. The project is conducted with the daily participation of more than 30 individuals including meteorologists, pilots, technical staff, and management. Of them, about a third are college undergraduate interns.

There are two specific programs in the NDCMP, one for intern co-pilots, and another for radar meteorology interns.

The Pilot Intern Program is an exclusive relationship between the Atmospheric Resource Board (ARB) and the University of North Dakota's Center for Aerospace Sciences. Through this program, Aviation majors enrolled at UND have the opportunity to pursue the internship by meeting certain certification requirements and completing two semester courses in Weather Modification theory and application.

Competition for the nine or ten available internships is intense as the prize is real-world experience and valuable multi-engine flight time. Most pilot interns will log upwards of 100 hours of flight time during the course of the summer, which would cost more than \$20,000 if they were to buy the time themselves. The sole benefit is not only theirs, however, as the training provides a pool of pilots who will be qualified to be Pilots-In-Command (PICs) the next summer. It is to the benefit of the counties



sponsoring the program and the ARB that these trained and qualified pilots return as PICs in subsequent years.

Following the pilot intern model, the ARB established its Meteorology Internship Program with UND's Department of Atmospheric Sciences in 1997, with this year's program being expanded to include meteorology students from the University of Northern Colorado, in Greeley, Colorado, and St. Cloud State University, in St. Cloud, Minnesota.

The Meteorology Intern Program places one undergraduate meteorology student at each of our radar sites in Bowman and Stanley, ND. Similar to the intern pilots, meteorology interns placed on the program gain valuable experience in the field they are studying, while the sponsoring counties and the ARB have the benefit of hiring meteorologists trained in cloud seeding operations when they receive their degrees.

Both of these programs have been very important in maintaining the high quality of individuals participating in the NDCMP each year. During the course of the Pilot Intern Program more than 250 UND aviation students have participated, with most of them now holding jobs as pilots in the commercial aviation industry. Likewise, former NDCMP meteorology interns are now lead meteorologists on weather modification projects in other states and even other countries.

These programs are a win-win situation for everyone, and the ARB is committed to continue training pilots and meteorologists as long as the need exists and funding allows. ■

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